Flood Insurance Scheme

964. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Flood Insurance Scheme has been introduced in every State;

(b) if so, the number of farmers in Orissa and other States that have insured their crops/fields; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) A Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme (CCIS) is already under implementation in the country since Kharif, 1985 season. The main objective of the scheme is to provide relief to the farmers whose crops are damaged due to occurence of natural calamities such as floods, droughts etc. The scheme is optional and as such, the States are free to opt in favour of the scheme. Presently, 15 States and 2 Union Territories are participating in the scheme.

(b) and (c) From Kharif 1985 to Rabi 1997-98, 6,44,72,723 farmers from various States/UTs have been covered. The number of farmers covered in Orissa State is 33,86,397.

Constitution of National Farmers' Welfare Fund

965. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has received a letter from the Government of Karnataka dated 8th December, 1998 for the constitution of a National Farmers' Welfare Fund;

(b) if so, the response of the Government thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that the Agricultural Credit Programmes do not provide for any measure in the eventuality of complete crop failures as has happened reecently with cotton and some other crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) Yes, Sir, Proposals from the Government of Karnataka and some other States have been received by Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for the creation of Farmers Welfare Funds for compensating the farmers in case of crop failures.

(b) and (c) The matter has been considered and the Central Government is already preparing a modified Crop Insurance Scheme under which the farmers will be duly compensated for failure of crops. In addition, the national calamity Relief Fund is already there from which assistance is provided to State Governments for giving financial assistance to the farmers in case of crop failures due to natural calamities. Besides, the scheme of Agricultural Credit Stabilisation Funds has been under operation since 1966-67 to make a stronger credit base for State Cooperative Banks to provide medium term loans to farmers in areas affected by Natural Calamities. In view of this, creation of a separate National Farmers' Welfare Fund is not considered necessary.

Scientific Methods in Agriculture in North East Region

966. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what are the details of various schemes/projects, etc launched/ sponsored by the present Government for use of Israel like scientific methods in agriculture in North East Region in general and Assam in particular; and

(b) if not, whether the Government contemplate doing so in future?